



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2020
6:00 PM
County Council Chambers

Those in attendance:

Chairman Dwight L. Stewart, Jr.
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Councilman Benton Blakely
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Vice Chairman W.J. Frierson
Councilman A.C. English
County Administrator, David W. Epperson

Press in attendance: None

Others in attendance included:

Lynden Anthony

Ted Felder

Meesha Witherspoon

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Councilman Richardson led the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the agenda for May 11, 2020.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Councilman Richardson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the council meeting minutes for the Regular Council Meeting, which was held on Monday, April 27, 2020.

3. Request

Administrator Epperson presented Council with a request from Barrineau Public Utilities to grant a defined service area for Water Service expansion.

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval giving Administrator Epperson Authority to negotiate an Agreement with Barrineau Public Utilities for Water Service Expansion.

4. Ordinance 2020-02

On motion by Vice Chairman Frierson and Seconded by Councilman Blakely, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2020-02 – An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Infrastructure Credit Agreement by and between Clarendon County, South Carolina, and BSPA Hospitality LLC; Providing for a Special Source Revenue Credit; and Other Related Matters.

5. Emergency Ordinance – Ordinance 2020-05

Administrator Epperson presented Council with an Emergency Ordinance – Ordinance 2020-05- Declaring Clarendon County Council Declaration of Public Health Emergency in response to the Public Safety threat of the Novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”), Effective May 11, 2020. He stated that this Ordinance would replace Emergency Ordinance 2020-04 which will expire on May 17, 2020 (60 days from approval).

6. Presentation of Proposed FY2020-2021 Budget

Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his presentation by thanking the staff of the Finance department, departmental managers and elected officials.

He stated that budgeting is an ongoing and dynamic process that is typically broken down into clear phases:

- County Council, other elected officials and administration estimate available resources, perform an assessment of needs and then set priorities. We determine how much in revenue we will have access to and ask stakeholders what's their funding needs are;
- These priorities are then reflected in a budget through an allocation of resources;
- Council, through these deliberations and in communication with our citizens, approve a budget;
- Elected officials and administration then implement these priorities through service delivery and project development; and
- We monitor our on-going results for any changes or modifications, if needed.

General Fund:

The General Assembly has capped the amount of increase allowed in millage rates at the local level. The budget contains the State allowed millage increase of 1.82% for County operations. [169.0 mils]

The General Fund budget includes a reduction of 8.0 mils, which is transferred over to the Emergency Services Special Tax District for use in integrating EMS into the Fire department, henceforth referred to as the Fire Rescue function.

We are also recommending an increase to the Local Option Sales Tax credit given to taxpayers of \$200,000; a credit of \$2.8 million and we anticipate a reduction in General Fund ad valorem revenue of about \$635,000. The current pandemic will directly impact our collection of local accommodation taxes, especially during the summer and early fall months. We are budgeting a reduction of 10% in local accommodations taxes in the upcoming fiscal year. The SC Bureau of Economic Advisors met last Friday and are still anticipating that the State will see a growth of nearly 2% in the upcoming Fiscal Year. If these projects are true and unless the State sees changes to its revenue expectations, we are budgeting a \$70,000 increase to our Local Government Fund. We expect that General Fund revenues will total \$21,622,000; a reduction of about 1.1% from the current fiscal year.

General Fund expenditures; the single largest change is the movement of the EMS appropriation that has historically gone to the hospital now embedded in Fire Rescue.

The budget package contains the requests of our locally elected officials and have not been modified. We just received a partial budget from the Board of Elections/Voter Registration office that is not included in your packages. Elected officials were offered to submit additional supporting documentation to you this evening; or, request that specific arrangements be made to present face to face in lieu of our "normal" presentations – none of whom took advantage.

This budget package submitted does not include a COLA for staff.

Most of the budgeted increases at the department level are a result of current staffing levels and an increase in health insurance premiums. Our health insurance premium will increase 14.5% January 1st; a result of increases in both state premium and our claims modifier.

The General Fund budget before you still reflect a deficit of nearly \$48,000.

Fire Rescue:

There are three major components to anticipated revenue for Fire Rescue services within the County:

- We are budgeting the same 1.82% mil increase for Fire operations;
- The new Emergency Services tax district will have an initial millage rate of 20.4 mils; and,
- Billable (net) collections of \$1.1 million (current level of collections experienced by McLeod Health) for EMS services.

Included in the Fire Rescue budget are the 39 new positions required to operate an effective EMS service. Therefore, we are requesting \$494,000 for capital needs:

- \$227,500 for Fire operations;
- \$123,000 to McLeod Health for the acquisition of the equipment currently being used for these services (ambulances, monitors, etc.); and,
- \$144,000 to remount an existing ambulance “box” to a new chassis.

With total Fire Rescue revenue of \$6,468,000 and expenditures of \$6,588,000; we are requesting that \$120,000 of current Fire Rescue fund balances be utilized in the upcoming fiscal year to balance the Fire Rescue budget.

Water and Sewer System:

Continued system expansion is being funded through remaining USDA grants. We are anticipating \$61,000 in net utility income; to be used in support of system equipment upgrades.

Weldon Auditorium:

We anticipate an increase in facility utilization in the fall of this year as several spring events were rescheduled. While we are not requesting a transfer from the General Fund to support operations this year, we are requesting the same \$60,000 transfer from Hospitality fee fund.

We would also like to include in the First Reading our request that a \$2,000,000 TAN be approved in the event it becomes necessary in the fall for cash flow purposes. We do not anticipate that it will be needed, we would like to have the public’s comments and your authorization to act quickly if necessary.

We are requesting to borrow an amount not to exceed \$250,000 in the form of a five-year Capital lease for the purchase and equipping of new public safety vehicles. The purpose being the need to keep our overall fleet in good operating condition.

We are looking at a preliminary General Fund budget that is out of balance by \$48,000, bringing it into balance will be challenging given that we went into this budget season assuming a no growth scenario.

7. Ordinance 2020-06

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman English, Council voted Unanimous Approval to the First Reading of Ordinance 2020-06- An Ordinance to Provide for a Levy of Taxes for County Purposes of Clarendon County, SC., for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020 and Ending June 30, 2021, to Direct the Expenditures of Said Taxes and Other Funds for Clarendon County, and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto Including the Administrative Accountability Procedures to be Followed During Implementation of the Budget (Operating and Capital) for Clarendon County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020 and Ending June 30, 2021.

8. Financial Report

Mr. Lynden Anthony, CFO, began his report by stating the following:

- **The General Fund** had Expenditures of \$2,021,760 and Revenue figures were not available as of April 30, 2020.
- **Weldon Auditorium** had Revenue of \$13,083 the month ending April 30, 2020 and total Expenses were \$98,506. He stated that the Weldon Auditorium ended the month of April 2020 after transfers with a Zero balance.
- **Water and Sewer Department** had Operating Revenue of \$767,840 and Operating Expenses of \$480,756 as of April 30, 2020. He stated that after depreciation and Bond interest expense, Interest Income, and Grant Revenue, the Water and Sewer Department had Net Utility Loss of \$47,306.
- **The C-Fund Program** for the month of April 2020 had a Cash Balance of \$2,027,379 of which \$1,769,729 has been committed to remaining local paving projects, State Construction Projects in Progress and State Proviso Funds. He stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$257,650 as of the end of April 2020.

9. Administrator's Report

Administrator Epperson began his report by giving Council the following updates:

1. **Water Projects** - work is continuing as planned but has been slowed by COVID-19. We anticipate that this will increase as we return to normal.
2. **Clarendon County Fire Rescue**- Our merger of EMS is on schedule for July 1, 2020. We are in the process of finalizing our hiring process and continuing to work on our facility upgrades.
3. **Road Paving** - Approved projects are still on going for this fiscal year. However, projects in the upcoming year may be delayed based on anticipated reductions in C-Funds received from the State.
4. **COVID-19**
 - As of May 11, 2020

Total Cases in Clarendon County	265
Active Cases from Last 14 Days	80

Public Outreach Efforts

1. We have established two (2) new hashtags that will be a part of all our Social Media Platforms. They are #ClarendonOne and #ClarendonStrong and the response from the public has been very positive.
2. We have already posted the first of our public service video announcements. More videos from other county officials will be forthcoming.
3. We continue to push out information regarding the pandemic and ways the public can protect themselves and their families.

Update on the Recreation Department

1. Registration for all Fall Sports will be from August 3-21, 2020.
2. For baseball and softball, we will have the same teams and age groups we had for the 2020 Spring League. The kids that were registered for the Spring League and sign up for the Fall will not pay a fee because they already have their uniforms. If additional players are needed, they will have to pay \$40, be assigned to a team and a uniform will be ordered. Practices and games will be held during the week in Manning and Turbeville (Barrineau included). It is possible that there could be an "end of the season" in-house tournament for each group, including AA, AAA, Ozone, Angels and Ponytails. The practices will run from August 31 – September 11, 2020. The games will begin the week of September 14 and run through the end of October.
3. For football, we will only be offering flag football this fall. The age groups for flag football will be 4-6, 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12. The registration fee will be \$30. Practices will be held on Saturdays for the month of September in Turbeville. The games will be held on Saturdays for the month of October with all teams playing two games per Saturday. All games will be in Turbeville.
4. For soccer, the age groups are 4-6, 7-10 and 11-14. The registration fee is \$30. Practices will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from August 31-September 11, 2020 in Manning. The games will be held on Saturdays from September 12-October 31 in Manning.
5. For Girls' Volleyball, the age groups are 5-8 and 9-12. The registration fee will be \$30. Practices will be held on Saturdays for the month of September in Turbeville at East Clarendon High School. The games will be held on Saturdays for the month of October, also in Turbeville at East Clarendon High School.
6. For Women's Kickball, the registration fee will be \$250 per team. The games will be held on Wednesdays in September and October in Manning.
7. For Golf, the program will resume in September.
8. For Community Center Classes and Gym Open Play, they will resume on Wednesdays and Sundays in September.
9. We anticipate all parks re-opening on June 1. Usage restrictions may be placed on each park based on

guidelines in place at the time of opening.

We of course want to emphasize that all of this may be subject to changes depending on what happens with COVID-19.

Update on Weldon Auditorium

Events at Weldon Auditorium are canceled through May. A decision on June events will be made by May 22, 2020. I plan to handle the events scheduled for the remaining months on a month by month basis.

Update on Reopening Plan

Staff: Staff will be returning to work fully on Monday, May 18, 2020 with new safety protocols in place.

General Public: On Monday, June 1, 2020, the public will be allowed into our facilities, but on a limited basis. This will be monitored and adjusted accordingly.

Misc.

-Offices will be closed on May 25, 2020 for Memorial Day.

-Our annual employee picnic and spring employee trash pick-up day will be moved to the fall.

- Councilman Blakely stated that he wanted to thank everybody for what they are doing, He stated that the First Responders, Doctors, Nurses, and McLeod are doing a very good job.
- Vice Chairman Frierson asked would there be any safety guard in place before we open back up to the public.
- Administrator Epperson responded by stating that we have ordered shields for the departments that have direct contact with the public and they will be professionally installed before June 1. He stated that we will also have personal protective equipment (PPE) available for our employees so that we can continue to practice social distancing. He stated that we are putting protocols in place to protect our employees and the public.
- Councilman English asked if there were any problems getting PPEs.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that we received some from the State and we have orders some, so there should not be any problem having enough on hand.
- Councilman Richardson asked do we have the staff that can repair roads that were previously paved.
- Administrator Epperson replied by stating that we have temporary staffing but any major work we will have to contract that out.
- Vice Chairman Frierson asked what is the number of paved road miles that we have.
- Administrator Epperson stated that there is about 300 plus miles of unpaved roads and around 60 miles of paved roads in the county.

10. Chairman's Report

Chairman Stewart began his report by thanking Administrator Epperson, the staff of Clarendon County, and the citizens for trying to keep all of us safe. He stated that it's a challenge teaching a child from home when you are not used to teaching someone. Chairman Stewart continued by stating that we want to take steps into opening the facility and we do not want to go backward. He asked everyone to keep Mike Briggs (who is battling brain cancer) in your prayers.

11. Executive Session

Chairman Stewart asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for a Legal Briefing on Opioid Litigation.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Councilman Blakely, Council voted Unanimous Approval to go into Executive Session for a Legal Briefing on Opioid Litigation. The Executive Session began at 7:00 pm.

12. Opening Session

On motion by Councilman Blakely and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous

Approval to come out of Executive Session and back into Open Session. The Executive Session ended at 7:18 pm.

Chairman Stewart stated that in Executive Session, Council received some updated information on the Opioid Litigation.

- Administrator Epperson stated that months ago Clarendon County Opted into the Class Action Lawsuit on Opioid Litigation and after receiving updated information, our Attorney recommended that the County Opt out of the Class Action Lawsuit on Opioid Litigation.

13. Resolution

On motion by Councilman English and Seconded by Councilman Blakely, Council voted Unanimous Approval to A Resolution to Opt Out of the Nationwide Class Certified for Negotiation purposed in *Re National Prescription Opiate Litigation, MDL 2804*.

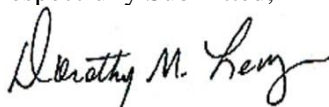
14. Adjourn

Chairman Stewart stated that we have exhausted our agenda and he asked for a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and Seconded by Vice Chairman Frierson, Council voted Unanimous Approval to adjourn the Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC

